

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 12, 2015

Agenda Item: 2015 Spring Turkey Quotas

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

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Background

Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for most game species. This happens every other year between December and final adoptions in February. Except for sage grouse, upland game bird season dates for 2015 were finalized in February 2014. Other season elements including bag and possession limits may be changed annually. There are no established quota ranges for spring turkey permits and consequently, all changes require Commission approval. There were two changes for 2015 Spring Turkey quotas and limits proposed during the December meeting, and both were for turkey hunting district 395 which includes most of Madison County and Jefferson, Silver Bow and Beaverhead Counties.

SPRING TURKEY

- HD 395-20: increase general permits from 35 to 50
- HD 395-21: increase youth permits from 5 to 10

In addition to the two changes mentioned above, Region 4 submitted a later proposal during the comment period. This proposal is to increase the number of permits in Cascade County from 5 to 10 to allow more harvest opportunity as the population grows. All other elements of the spring turkey quotas and limits are proposed to remain unchanged from 2014.

Public Involvement Process & Results

Public comment on this proposal went from the December meeting through 5 PM, Friday, January 23. Five comments were received on the original proposal: 3 in support, especially for youths; one wanting more permits near Townsend; and one speaking to the difference in allowable weapons between spring and fall seasons. All comments are included in their entirety in the Commission packet. Comment on the additional proposal to increase permits in Cascade County can be taken during the February meeting.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2014 (status quo) as per staff justifications, public comment and/or Commission discussion.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the Commission adopt the proposed changes in HD 395 and Cascade County, keeping other elements unchanged from 2014. This is consistent with known biology, management history and survey efforts to date.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission to adopt the proposed spring 2015 turkey quotas and limits in HD 395 and Cascade County as presented by FWP.